

#### Message from the Chair



Cedric L Richmond

We are living in uncertain times. We don't know when we will return to our city or when institutions that are necessary to our production and lively hood will be restored particularly, the Orleans Parish School Board. It has recently been reported that a number of schools in Algiers and uptown New Orleans will reopen in November 2005 or January 2006. The number of schools has not been confirmed, and unfortunately, the opening of those schools will not address the thousands of students who have been displaced from their homes and schools. Given this, parents need to understand how urgent it is to register their school age children wherever they are temporarily being housed.

Local school systems have been accommodating and accepting students who have been displaced by Hurricane Katrina all over the country.

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## LOUISIANA LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS THIS WEEK

SEPTEMBER 26, 2005

#### HOUSING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

To meet the immediate needs of individuals and families displaced by Hurricane Katrina, the Departments of Homeland Security (DHS) and Housing & Urban Development (HUD) announced measures to provide transitional housing assistance to evacuees. The Federal government is taking action to cut through red tape and bureaucracy and provide evacuees with flexibility, choice, and portability, so they can move from temporary shelters to more stable housing. Rental assistance will begin with payments for three months of housing totaling \$2,358 and will be extended for qualifying evacuees up to 18 months. Because rental assistance is being delivered in an expedited

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# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR INSURANCE PAYMENTS

Governor Blanco signed an executive order on September 19, 2005, which grants Commissioner of Insurance Robert Wooley the temporary authority to implement certain emergency insurance rules in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath.

Residents of Jefferson, Lafourche, Livingston, Orleans, Plaguemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptists, St. Mary, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Terrebonne and Washington parishes should know that: (1) Insurance companies cannot cancel or not-renew insurance policies for holders of policies in the affected parishes listed above. These are policyholders who have all types of insurance, including, but not limited to flood, homeowners, auto, life, health and workers' comp; (2) No policy can be canceled or non-renewed solely because of a Hurricane Katrina claim; (3) Citizens affected by Hurricane Katrina in the above-listed parishes will receive an automatic extension of time to pay insurance premiums due on or after August 26, without any late fees or penalties; (4) Citizens with health insurance coverage in the above-listed parishes may receive medical care out-of-network and prescription medication out-of-network without penalty; (5) Public adjusters must register with the Department of Insurance and admitted insurance companies must register their adjusters with the Department; (6) Public adjusters cannot charge a percentage of the final claim as payment for their services. They can charge a flat fee or an hourly fee. This limited transfer of authority shall remain in effect for the duration of the state of emergency and/or any subsequent state of emergency declared thereafter with regard to Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath.

#### PHONE BANK

American Red Cross Disaster Assistance 1-800-975-7585

American Red Cross Missing Family Members 1-877-LOVED-1S 568-3317

FEMA 1-800-621-FEMA (3362)

Find Family National Call Center 1-800-326-9393

LA Housing Finance Authority 1-866-310-7971

LA Department of Labor Unemployment 1-800-818-7811

LA Department of Social Services (Food Stamps) 1-888-524-3578

> Postal Service 1-800-275-8777

Salvation Army 1-888-363-2769

Social Security 1-800-772-1213 1-800-325-0778 (TTY)

WIC 1800-251-BABY (2229)

### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AWAIT

The United States Small Business Administration is urging individuals to become apart of the SBA Disaster Assistance Team. SBA has immediate job opportunities to help victims of the disaster put their lives back together. All applicants should fax a resume to, 225-379-3885 or contact Mike Mazzanti by phone at, 225-376-5031 or email micahel.mazzanti@sba.org. Requirements vary.

Applications are being taken for the following positions:

- Loss Verifiers \$16.36 to \$20.02 per hour
- Mail Clerk / Couriers \$11.81 per hour
- Customer Service Representatives \$16.36 to \$20.02 per hour
- Attorney Advisor / Law Clerk / Paralegal Specialist \$16.36 to \$20.02 per hour

#### FIND FAMILY CALL CENTER

A national toll-free number is available for families whose loved ones may have perished during Hurricane Katrina. Concerned relatives, who are unable to find a missing loved one and fear the worst, should call the Find Family National Call Center at 1-866-326-9393.

This is the nationwide collection point and official coordination center for information on persons missing from the storm. Family members can phone this number 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Disaster officials want to remind callers that this number is specifically for those concerned that a loved one may be deceased.

Callers will be asked a series of questions for the purpose of identifying and reuniting family members. The center respects the privacy of individuals and will treat the information with the utmost care and confidentiality. Housing assistance. cont.

fashion to get money to evacuees immediately, it may be necessary to reevaluate qualifications to adjust payments to families after the first three months.

Chair's msg. cont.

Moreover, their response has been overwhelmingly positive. Students in most cases will be supplied with uniforms, books, and essential supplies. More importantly, the Homeless Act entitles displaced students to receive free lunch. Also, in most Louisiana parishes free transportation is provided to and from school.

The continued education of our young people is extremely important. We don't want them to be left behind. Please enroll them in school as soon as possible.



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Mailing Address: Post Office Box 44003

Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Physical Address:

900 N. Third St.

Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802

Phone: 225-342-7342 Fax:: 225-342-0364

Email:

caucusb@legis.state.la.us

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